

# Why is there so much suffering and evil in the world? (Part II)

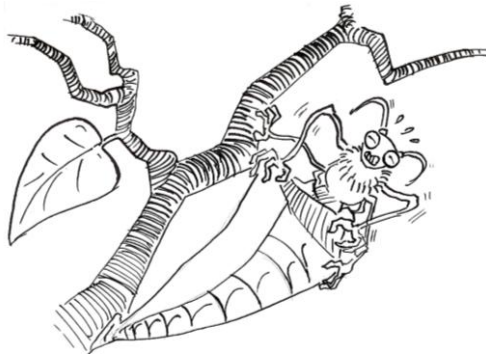
## CHAPTER 9

In this chapter, we will consider the problem of suffering and evil from a biblical perspective and offer several points brought out by Scripture, culminating with the Christian affirmation that God, Himself, entered our world, experienced our pain, accepted the blame for our evil and took our punishment.

### **BIBLICAL PERSPECTIVES ON SUFFERING AND EVIL**

#### 1. Suffering can develop our character and lead us to maturity.

Suffering is not always evil. Often, it is a good thing in the human experience and essential for our survival. The pain sensors in our central nervous system serve as necessary warning-signals. Without them our lives would be “fraught with danger, and devoid of many basic pleasures.”<sup>1</sup> Dr. Paul Brand, one of the world’s leading experts on leprosy, discovered that the most dangerous aspect of this disease is actually the absence of pain. The more pain that is muffled in a person’s body, Brand’s research revealed, the more likely that person will destroy it. Pain not only serves to protect the body, but also to strengthen it. For example, have you ever watched a butterfly struggling to get free from a cocoon?



It certainly doesn’t look like it is having a good time. In fact, it looks like it is suffering. However, if we feel sorry for it, intervene and tear the cocoon open to set the butterfly free, it will die. The struggle strengthens the butterfly so it can survive. The same type of thing could be said about a human’s physical, mental, emotional and spiritual development as the following New Testament verse points out:

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.” (James 1:2-4)

Someone once asked the great Renaissance sculptor Michelangelo, “How can you take a huge hunk of granite and turn it into David?” He reportedly answered, “That hunk of granite *is* David. I just have to remove everything that does not belong.” How can God take a sinful, imperfect, flawed human being and make them into a mature, complete, holy, blameless, Christ-like person? God has to remove everything that does not belong and that process, though necessary, is often painful. At times, God uses affliction “like a hammer and chisel, chipping and cutting to reveal his image in you. God chooses as his model his Son, Jesus Christ.”<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Suffering helps us realize that we need God.

“God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks in our conscience, but shouts in our pains. It is his megaphone to rouse a deaf world.”<sup>3</sup>

This famous quote from C. S. Lewis reminds us that sometimes suffering is the only thing that has the potency to jolt us out of our attitude of self-sufficiency and turn us away from a path of destruction. The apostle Paul, no stranger to suffering, often acknowledged this in his writings, as we see in the following verse:

“We do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about the hardships we suffered in the province of Asia. We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired even of life. Indeed, in our hearts we felt the sentence of death. *But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.*” (2 Corinthians 1:8-9)

Suffering can purify our faith, encourage holiness, promote humility, cause us to repent and bring us closer to God. Paul recognized that the “thorn in his flesh” was to keep him “from becoming conceited” (2 Corinthians 12:7). Peter even goes on to say, “...he who has suffered in his body is done with sin” (1 Peter 4:1). The writer of the 119<sup>th</sup> Psalm would agree, for he admitted, “before I was afflicted I went astray, but now I obey your word” (Psalm 119:67).

## 3. Our suffering can help us understand the suffering of others.

Paul writes, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God. For just as the sufferings of Christ flow over into our lives, so also through Christ our comfort overflows” (2 Corinthians 1:3-5).

4. Sometimes we suffer because of personal sin.

“Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction...”

(Galatians 6:7-8).

We must not overlook the fact that many of our wounds are self inflicted. A majority of the suffering in our world is directly caused by humans doing things that God commanded us not to do. The Bible is also clear that some suffering is due to God’s discipline.<sup>4</sup> However, it is important to point out that Jesus rejected the idea that there is always a necessary direct correlation between our personal sin and our suffering.<sup>5</sup>

5. God never intended this world to be our ultimate home.

Suffering, says Joni Eareckson Tada, reminds us that we should never get too comfortable in this fallen world which is destined for destruction and decay. She writes:

“Earth’s pain keeps crushing our hopes, reminding us that this world can never satisfy; only heaven can ... Suffering keeps swelling our feet so that earth’s shoes won’t fit.”<sup>6</sup>

In Hebrews 11, after recording a litany of faithful sufferers, the writer says this:

“All these people were still living by faith when they died. They did not receive the things promised; they only saw them and welcomed them from a distance. And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth...Instead, they were longing for a better country - a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them” (Hebrews 11:13-16).

Paul adds these words of hope: “I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.” (Romans 8:18) “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9).

6. Life and good health are gifts from God.

Why is it that we are so quick to question God’s character when we are faced with hardship, yet scarcely acknowledge him when enjoying good health and things are going well? Where does life and good health come from in the first place? The Bible clearly claims “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 3:23, 6:23). Therefore, if God were to eliminate all humanity this instant, he would not have compromised his justice or righteousness. The astonishing reality is that we are only alive today because God “does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities” (Psalm 103:10).<sup>7</sup>

## 7. Where is atheism when people suffer?

Christianity offers hope, peace and comfort in the midst of affliction. What does atheism offer that comforts or gives hope when experiencing pain? The question is often raised, “Where was God during the Holocaust?” An appropriate response can be, “Where was atheism during the Holocaust? Was it not the natural outworking of atheism that fueled the Holocaust?”<sup>8</sup>

It would be appropriate here to discuss the Holocaust in further detail as it is extremely significant when discussing the problem of suffering and evil. Questions about the Holocaust are obviously difficult for anyone to address. What person from any religious background or worldview could confidently proclaim, “I have adequate and satisfactory answers to all the questions raised by the Holocaust?” The Holocaust has caused many to abandon the notion of an all-loving, all-powerful God. The Jewish author, Richard Rubenstein concluded, “...we stand in a cold, silent, unfeeling cosmos, unaided by any power beyond our own resources. After Auschwitz, what else can a Jew say about God?”<sup>9</sup>

What can Christians offer as a response to this? First of all, it is important to remember that Hitler’s goals were clearly stated: “I freed Germany from the stupid and degrading fallacies of conscience and morality ... We will train people before whom the world will tremble. I want young people capable of violence – imperious, relentless and cruel.”<sup>10</sup> The Holocaust was planned and executed by people who were following a message that was the absolute antithesis of the Christian message.

The underlying issue raised by an event such as the Holocaust can be stated this way: The evil and wickedness during the Holocaust was at such an appalling level that God should have intervened.

How might we respond to such a statement? Perhaps we should consider the questions that would immediately emerge if God would have intervened and thwarted all attempts of evil during this time in history. If this “level of wickedness” was extracted from human history, what about the next level? What about the horrendous atrocities Joseph Stalin inflicted on his own people? Again, God could have foiled all plans of human wickedness during Stalin’s regime – but, what about the next level of evil intentions, and the next, and the next? If God intervened and stripped away every “level” of evil and wickedness, it would soon get personal. Eventually, God would reach the level of evil in our hearts, minds and behavior.

Years ago, *The Times* solicited a group of famous British writers to respond to the question, “What is wrong with the world?” The shortest and most profound reply was written by G.K. Chesterton. He wrote the following:

“In response to your question, ‘What’s wrong with the world?’ – I am.

Yours faithfully,

G.K. Chesterton.”<sup>11</sup>

Commenting on this issue, Michael Green offers the following insights:

“Suppose for a moment that God were immediately to wipe out all evil? Would not humanity be destroyed? For which of us is free from evil? Far from remaining an abstract intellectual problem, evil is a very pressing moral problem within each of us. We ourselves are the problem of evil! And if simple eradication were the answer, we would have no hope.”<sup>12</sup>

#### 8. But... “What about the death of a child?”

“If God is good and can do anything, how do you explain the death of a child?”

First of all, it is important to be reminded that...

If there is no God, then there is no explanation.

If there is no God, there is no answer to this question.

If there is no God, when a child dies there is no hope for the family to ever see that child again.

However, from a Christian point of view, when a child dies the family can still have hope, peace, strength and comfort. Here are four reasons why:

#### **A. God created the child’s life; he has the power to give the child life again.**

The Bible tells about a man named Lazarus who died. His sister, Martha, went to talk to Jesus and said. “‘Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But I know that even now God will give you whatever you ask.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Your brother will rise again.’ Martha answered, ‘I know he will rise again in the resurrection at the last day.’ Jesus said to her, ‘**I am the resurrection and the life.** He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?’” (John 11:21-26)

**B. When a child dies he or she goes to Heaven which is a better place than our world.**

The apostle Paul stated, “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: **I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far.**” (Philippians 1:21-24)

The following verses indicate that when a child dies, he or she goes to be with God in Heaven: 2 Samuel 12:21-23; Matthew 18:2-4, 19:13-15; Romans 9:11; 1 Corinthians 14:20; Deuteronomy 1:39.

**C. God can comfort the family who lost the child.**

To the family and loved ones, God can be the comforter and healer. King David, who himself lost a child, wrote, “Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff they comfort me.” (Psalm 23)

**D. The Bible promises us that the separation caused by death is only temporary for those who are Christians.**

“Brothers, we do not want you to be ignorant about those who fall asleep, or to grieve like the rest of men, who have no hope. We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.” (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Helen Keller beautifully expressed the unquenchable hope of the Christian faith this way:

“For three things I thank God every day of my life: thanks that He has vouchsafed me knowledge of His works; deep thanks that He has set in my darkness the lamp of faith; deep, deepest thanks that I have another life to look forward to – a life joyous with light and flowers and heavenly song.”

9. In Christ, all suffering is temporary.

The Bible encourages us with the following verses about heaven:

“Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.” (Revelation 7:13-17)

“And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, ‘Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.’ He who was seated on the throne said, ‘I am making everything new!’” (Revelation 21:3-5)

The Bible not only promises that everything in heaven will be new, pure and unblemished, but also that God’s resurrected children will be given new resurrected bodies. For example, the apostle Paul compares our earthly body as a seed. In 1 Corinthians 15:35-44, he writes:

“But someone may ask, ‘How are the dead raised? With what kind of body will they come?’ How foolish! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. When you sow, you do not plant the body that will be, but just as a seed ... So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.”

In Philippians 3:21, Christians are promised that Christ will “transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.” Commenting on these encouraging verses, Joni Eareckson Tada (who was disabled in a diving accident and is now a quadriplegic) writes:

“I still can hardly believe it. I, with shriveled, bent fingers, atrophied muscles, gnarled knees, and no feeling from the shoulders down, will one day have a new body, light, bright, and clothed in righteousness – powerful and dazzling. Can you imagine the hope this gives someone spinal-chord injured like me? Or someone who is cerebral palsied, brain-injured, or has multiple sclerosis? Imagine the hope this gives someone who is manic-depressive. No other religion, no other philosophy promises new bodies, hearts and minds. Only in the Gospel of Christ do hurting people find such incredible hope.”<sup>13</sup>

## 10. God is not finished yet!

One of the unique features of the Christian faith is the assurance that although evil and suffering persists in our world today, they will be abolished in the future. Put another way, “the existence of evil does not eliminate the possibility of God, but the existence of God guarantees the elimination of evil.”<sup>14</sup> Christians embrace the biblical teaching that justice delayed is not justice denied.<sup>15</sup> Peter Kreeft reminds us, “criticizing God for not punishing evil people right now is like reading half a novel and criticizing the author for not resolving the plot.”<sup>16</sup>

***“And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28)***

## 11. God experienced human suffering.

The book of Hebrews encourages those who suffer with these words, “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are - yet was without sin” (Hebrews 4:15). The Christian faith proclaims that God took the pain of his creation onto himself. He entered our world of evil, temptation and suffering in the person of Jesus Christ. Scripture tells us that Christ, “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death - even death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:6-8) “He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed” (Isaiah 53:2-5). These profound statements proclaim that God loves us so much that he chose to take on our condition and experience our suffering. While Jesus lived with us on earth he became hungry, thirsty and tired (John 4:6, 19:28; Mark 4:38). He wept over the death of a friend (John 11:35). He knew temptation of every kind. He knew the agony of being lied about, betrayed, misunderstood, abandoned, abused, violated and beaten. He even experienced the cruelest form of death. God's response to the problem of evil was that he came right down into it, experienced it, and finally, conquered it. Ravi Zacharias said it well, “Suffering and pain did not spare the very Son of God. God conquers not in spite of the dark mystery of evil, but through it.”<sup>17</sup>

## 12. God's Answer: The Cross of Christ

The cross of Christ is God's answer to the problem of suffering and evil. Michael Green eloquently remarks:

No other faith suggests anything remotely comparable. The cross shows that God is no stranger to pain and evil. God does not allow us to go through what he himself avoids. He came face to face with concentrated evil in this world when he came among us in the person of Jesus... He did not give us an exhaustive answer to the problem of suffering: he shared it.<sup>18</sup>

When I was working as a campus minister at the University of Florida several years ago, I had the great privilege of studying the Bible with a post-graduate Muslim student from Egypt. During one of our discussions about Jesus, I asked him, "What does the Qur'an say about Jesus?" He told me that the Qur'an tells us that Jesus was a prophet who was born of a virgin named Mary. He added, "the Qur'an also tells us that Jesus could perform miracles and was without sin." I asked him, "Why, then, do you not believe that Jesus was 'Immanuel' (God with us)?" His response was interesting. "Do you know why I can't believe that Jesus was 'God in the flesh?' Because of this..." He then stood up and spread his arms apart like Jesus on the cross. "This is weakness! God is God and can't be weak." I asked him, "Do you love your children?" He said, "Of course, I love my children!" I asked him, "At what lengths would you go to show your love for them?" It seemed that he momentarily forgot the context of our conversation and passionately told me, "Russ, I would die for my children!" There was a long silence between us. I eventually spoke, "You see, that is not weakness. In fact, that is ultimate strength in an act of ultimate love."

***"Only on the cross of Jesus Christ do love, justice and forgiveness converge."***  
**(Ravi Zacharias)**

***"From the cross there will spring light sufficient to illuminate even the darkest night ... A ray of light pierces the gloom ... the impenetrable mystery of evil meets the paradoxical mystery of the cross."***  
**(Henri Blocher)<sup>1</sup>**

***"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God ... For the foolishness of God is wiser than man's wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man's strength."***  
**(1 Corinthians 1:18, 25)**

13. We are called to be part of the solution of the problem of pain.

In his book entitled, *Where Is God When It Hurts*, Philip Yancey makes the following insightful comment: “We usually think of the problem of pain as a question we ask of God, but it is also a question he asks of us. How do we respond to hurting people?”<sup>19</sup> Indeed, we see this throughout the Bible. When God spoke to Moses from the burning bush, we find a clear example of how our Creator goes about responding to human suffering. God essentially tells Moses in Exodus chapter three: “I have heard the cries of my people. I have seen their oppression. Therefore, I am sending you.” Likewise, just before Jesus was crucified, he told his disciples, “As the Father has sent me, I am sending you” (John 20:21). He taught his followers that rather than continuing to be a part of the problem of human pain, we should become part of the solution. Throughout the Bible, God’s people are called to “defend the cause of the weak and fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Rescue the weak and needy ... Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” (Psalm 82:3-4; Isaiah 1:17) Furthermore, Christians are reminded in James 1:27 that “religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.” Jesus instructed that in “ministering to the hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick and the prisoner, we would be ministering to him, indicating that he identified himself with all needy and suffering people?”<sup>20</sup>

**Conclusion**

Human suffering and evil are never the will of God. He may permit it, screen it, even use it for his good purposes, but he is not the cause. Lamentations 3:33 gives us this assurance about God: “He (God) does not willingly bring affliction or grief to the children of men.” However, because of his unfathomable love for us he willingly chose to accept the blame and the punishment for all the evil that humans have ever committed. Let us conclude by hearing these powerful words of John Stott:

## **"The Long Silence"**

(adapted from John Stott's book *"The Cross of Christ"*)

At the end of time, billions of people were scattered on a great plain before God's throne. Most shrank back from the brilliant light before them. But some groups near the front talked heatedly - not with cringing shame, but with belligerence. *"Can God judge us? How can he know about suffering?"* The words came from a thin, starving young girl. She ripped open a sleeve to reveal a tattooed number from a Nazi concentration camp. *"We endured terror ...beatings ... torture ...death!"* In another group, a man lowered the collar on his shirt revealing an ugly rope burn on his neck, *"What about this...I was lynched for no crime, for no reason other than the color of my skin."* All across the plain, there were hundreds of such groups. Each had a complaint against God for the evil and suffering he permitted in the world. *"How lucky God was to live in heaven, where all was sweetness and light...no weeping, no fear, no hunger, no hatred...What did God know of all that humans had been forced to endure in this world?"* -- they were saying. So each of these groups sent forth their leader, chosen because he or she had suffered the most -- a Jewish person, a black person, a person from Hiroshima, a horribly deformed arthritic, several with various forms of disabilities -- at last they were ready to present their case...it was rather clever. They pronounced that before God could be qualified to be their judge, he would have to endure what they had endured. Their decision was ... God would have to be sentenced today. Sentenced to live on earth and to live as a man who would suffer. *"Let em' be born a Jew!" "Let the legitimacy of his birth be doubted!" "Let him know what it is like to be hungry!" "Let his work be so difficult that even his family will think he is out of his mind when he tries to do it!" "Let him be betrayed by his closest friends!" "Let him face false charges!" "Let him be tried by a prejudiced jury!" "Let him be convicted by a cowardly judge!" "Let him be tortured!" "Let him see what it means to be so terribly alone and then let him die! Let him die so that there can be no doubt that he died!" "Let there be a great host of witnesses to verify it."* As each leader pronounced the portion that he or she would add to the sentence, loud murmurs of approval went up from the throng of people, *"Yes, yes, it's only fair! It's only right!" "If he would judge us, he must face what we faced!"* And when the last had finished pronouncing their sentence, **there was a long silence...**

No one dared utter another word. No one could even move. For suddenly, it dawned upon them all. That God had already served his sentence and that God would judge no one in whose shoes he had not already walked in.<sup>21</sup>

***If you want to know what God is like...Look at the cross! Jesus, God in the flesh, suffered and died so that you could have forgiveness for your sins, and that you could spend eternity in a place without suffering and evil.***

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## NOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Philip Yancey, *Where Is God When It Hurts?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), 18.
- <sup>2</sup> Joni Eareckson Tada and Steven Estes, *When God Weeps: Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 116.
- <sup>3</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 138.
- <sup>4</sup> See Hebrews 12:5-11; Deuteronomy 28:15; Psalms 32:3-5; 38:1-8; 1 Corinthians 11:30; Psalm 107:17.
- <sup>5</sup> See John 9:1-3; Luke 13:1-5.
- <sup>6</sup> Joni Eareckson Tada and Steven Estes, *When God Weeps: Why Our Sufferings Matter to the Almighty* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 202.
- <sup>7</sup> The Christian lecturer, Michael Ramsden suggests “maybe we struggle with suffering so much in the West because we are so comfortable most of the time that we feel we don’t need God. We don’t rely on Him on a daily basis, and so we don’t really know Him as we should. When suffering comes along, therefore, it is not so much that it takes us away from God, but that it reveals to us that we haven’t really been close to Him in the first place.” Scottish theologian James S. Stewart brings up another important point, “it is the spectators, the people who are outside, looking at the tragedy, from whose ranks the skeptics come; it is not those who are actually in the arena and who know suffering from the inside. Indeed, the fact is that it is the world’s greatest sufferers who have produced the most shining examples of unconquerable faith.” -- Warren W. Wiersbe, *Classic Sermons on Suffering* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1984), 92.
- <sup>8</sup> In fact, “if we are indeed the random product of evolution then aggression and domination are in themselves good things, because at least they assure survival of the fittest.” -- Ravi Zacharias, *Cries of the Heart* (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1998), 214.
- <sup>9</sup> Blanchard, *Where Was God on September 11?*, 9.
- <sup>10</sup> Ravi Zacharias, *The Real Face of Atheism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2004), 62.
- <sup>11</sup> John Blanchard, *Where Was God on September 11?* (Auburn, MA: Evangelical Press, 2002), 15.
- <sup>12</sup> Michael Green, *Evangelism Through the Local Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990), 196.

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<sup>13</sup> Joni Eareckson Tada, *Heaven: Your Real Home* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995), 53.

<sup>14</sup> John Blanchard, *Where Was God on September 11?* (Auburn, MA: Evangelical Press, 2002), 24.

<sup>15</sup> See Psalm 58:10-11.

<sup>16</sup> Peter Kreeft, as quoted in Lee Stroble, *The Case for Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 43.

<sup>17</sup> Ravi Zacharias, *Is There Meaning in Evil and Suffering?* (Video: Faith and Science Lecture Forum, Ravi Zacharias International Ministries, 1999).

<sup>18</sup> Michael Green, *Evangelism Through the Local Church* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1990), 201.

<sup>19</sup> Philip Yancey, *Where Is God When It Hurts?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990), xi.

<sup>20</sup> John Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Leicester: Inter-Varsity Press, 1986) 335. See also the following verses: Matthew 1:23, 25:34-40; James 1:27 and Acts 9:4.

<sup>21</sup> Adapted from John R. W. Stott, *The Cross of Christ* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 336.